

129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

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RCE-20131012-CW-157

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South Dakota Guard unit cleans up remnants of Afghanistan war

By U.S. Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan (Oct. 12, 2013) – After 12 years of shipping supplies to troops in Afghanistan a surplus of containers have filled bases throughout the country.

The South Dakota Army National Guard's 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion is working to not only sustain the four transportation units and ordnance company they manage at Kandahar Airfield, they are also helping units in Regional Command-South drawdown equipment.

"I have heard that there are up to 80,000 containers in Afghanistan," said Maj. David Moore, support operations officer, of Rapid City, S.D. "Our goal is to help reduce the number of containers by identifying whether or not they need to be demolished for scrap metal or reused for packing up equipment to send home."

Ninety-five percent of the containers coming in and out of Kandahar Airfield will go to the Central Receiving Shipping Point where the containers are inspected.

There are three categories for the containers: one is "sea worthy" where it can be shipped back to the states by a ship; the second is "intra-theater," meaning the container is not good enough to go back on a ship but can be used inside the country; and "demolished," which means it is only good for scrap.

The 152nd is moving the containers at a hectic pace, eliminating more than 1,200 in the last three weeks alone, said Moore.

A hectic pace is what is keeping Sgt. 1st Class John Kramer, noncommissioned officer in charge, CRSP, of Philip, S.D., busy from dawn to dusk.

"There is a lot more to containers than I ever thought," said Kramer. "When you are going down the highway back home and see a container on a truck you don't think about it. You don't know what it is hauling or what the numbers mean. Now I look at a container and know if its sea worthy or if it needs to be demolished."

Kramer has a list of things he looks for when inspecting a container.

“Checking for holes in the containers is the biggest thing, and it also gets down to the nitty gritty of how many dents it has,” he said. “The doors need to have a tight seal. We also check the numbers on the container to ensure the container is accounted for on the international database, which tracks the ownership of the container.”

Lt. Col. David Bedard, deputy commanding officer, 15th Sustainment Brigade, Fort Bliss, Texas, said the 152nd will have contributed to 30 percent of their overall reduction.

“The 152nd has gone above and beyond,” said Bedard. “They really are a stellar organization. From all accounts, when you look at these guys they are just stellar.”

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131008-Z-CW157-122

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – South Dakota Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Adam Holen, 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, of Volga, S.D., operates a rough terrain container handler to move containers with guidance from two Soldiers from the Maryland Army National Guard’s 1129th Transportation Company, at Kandahar Airfield, Oct. 8, 2013. The 152nd CSSB is working to not only sustain the four transportation units and ordnance company they manage at Kandahar Airfield, they are also helping units in Regional

Command-South drawdown equipment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/RELEASED)



131008-Z-CW157-099

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – South Dakota Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Adam Holen, 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, of Volga, S.D., operates a rough terrain container handler to place a container onto the back of a palletized load system with the guidance from Maryland Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jim Blakeley, 1129th Transportation Company, at Kandahar Airfield, Oct. 8, 2013. The 152nd CSSB is working to not only sustain the four transportation units and ordnance company they manage at Kandahar Airfield, they are also helping units in Regional Command-South drawdown equipment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/RELEASED)



131008-Z-CW157-153

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – South Dakota Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Adam Holen, 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, of Volga, S.D., operates a rough terrain container handler to move containers with the guidance of Maryland Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jim Blakeley, 1129th Transportation Company, at Kandahar Airfield, Oct. 8, 2013. The 152nd CSSB is working to not only sustain the four transportation units and ordnance company they manage at Kandahar Airfield, they are also helping units in Regional Command-South drawdown equipment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/RELEASED)



131009-Z-CW157-162

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – South Dakota Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class John Kramer, 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, of Philip, S.D., and North Carolina Army Reserve Spc. David Bryan, 846th Transportation Company, of Aberdeen, N.C., verify numbers on the data plate of a container for the International database at Kandahar Airfield, Oct. 9, 2013. The 152nd CSSB is working to not only sustain the four transportation units and ordnance company they manage at Kandahar Airfield, they are also helping units in Regional Command-South drawdown equipment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/RELEASED)

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